

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A review facility for providing an item for review by a plurality of reviewers
 5 and collecting comments from reviewers, said review facility comprising:
 preparation means for preparing an item for interactive review;
 means for collecting comments on elements of prepared items; and
 means for distributing collected comments from review.
- 10 2. A review facility as in claim 1 wherein the means for preparing said item for
 interactive review comprises:
 selection means for selecting and retrieving said item; and
 means for formatting retrieved said items.
- 15 3. A review facility as in claim 2 wherein the means for formatting said item
 identifies individual said elements within said item, reviewers providing comments
 on ones of said individual elements.
- 20 4. A review facility as in claim 3 where said item is a software source code
 block, said individual elements are individual lines of said source code, and said
 formatting means further builds a comment file, collected comments on code lines
 being contained in said comment file.
- 25 5. A review facility as in claim 3 where said item is a document, said individual
 elements are individual blocks of text of said document, and said formatting means
 further builds a comment file, collected comments on blocks of code being
 contained in said comment file.
- 30 6. A review facility as in claim 1 wherein the means for collecting comments
 comprises:
 means for providing items to reviewers; and
 reviewer selection means for selecting said items for review responsive to
 reviewer selection.

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7. A review facility as in claim 6 wherein the item being reviewed is source code for software and elements of said source code are individual lines of code.

8. A review facility as in claim 6 wherein the item being reviewed is a document and elements of said document are individual blocks of text.

9. A review facility as in claim 1 further comprising:

means for conducting a formal review, said formal review considering collected comments provided by reviewers participating in said formal review and previously distributed to said reviewers by said means for distributing collected comments.

10. A method of reviewing an item being prepared for distribution, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) preparing an item for interactive review;
- b) making said prepared item available to a plurality of reviewers for comments on item elements, ones of said plurality of reviewers returning comments on said prepared item; and
- c) conducting a formal review meeting of said plurality of reviewers, whereby one or more of the previously provided comments sufficiently provides attending reviewers awareness of a particular condition with respect to said item that said comment may be addressed in said item prior to said formal review meeting, such that further action is unnecessary at the time of said formal review with respect to said particular condition and each corresponding said comment.

11. A method as in claim 10 wherein the step (a) of preparing said item for interactive review comprises the steps of:

- i) retrieving said item for review;
- ii) formatting said item, individual item elements being identified for comment in said formatted item.

12. A method as in claim 11 wherein said item is source code and said formatting step ii) identifies individual lines of source code for comments and

further, builds a comment file, comments provided on said lines of source code being contained in said comment file.

13. A method as in claim 11 wherein said item is a document and said formatting
5 step ii) identifies individual blocks of text in said document for comments and
further, builds a comment file, comments provided on said blocks of text being
contained in said comment file.

14. A method as in claim 10 wherein the step (b) of making the prepared item
10 available for comments comprises for each reviewer the steps of:

- i) selecting said item;
- ii) reviewing comments on said selected item;
- iii) determining whether said selected item warrants additional
comments;
- 15 iv) - distributing warranted additional comments on said selected item;
and
- v) repeating steps (i-iv) until all items for review have been selected.

15. A method as in claim 14 wherein said item is source code and elements in
20 said item are lines in said source code, comments on any of said lines being
contained in a comment file.

16. A method as in claim 14 wherein said item is a document and elements in
said document are blocks of text, comments on any of said blocks of text being
25 contained in a comment file.

17. A method as in claim 14 wherein items are stored in a central repository and
the step (i) of selecting said item comprises connecting over the Internet to said
central repository and accessing said item.

18. A method as in claim 10 wherein returned comments are available for
display by reviewers upon receipt.

19. A computer program product for presenting an item for review by a plurality of reviewers and collecting comments from reviewers, said computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code thereon, said computer readable program code comprising:

5 computer program code means for preparing an item for review;
 computer program code means for collecting comments on prepared items;
 computer program code means for distributing comments to reviewers; and
 computer program code means for presenting prepared items for formal
 review, said formal review considering collected comments provided by reviewers,
 10 whereby reviewers participating in said formal review and previously distributed to
 said reviewers.

20. A computer program product as in claim 19 wherein the computer program code means for presenting said item for interactive review comprises:

15 computer program code selection means for selecting and retrieving said
 item; and
 computer program code means for formatting retrieved said items.

21. A computer program product as in claim 20 wherein the computer program
 20 code means for formatting said item identifies individual said elements within said
 item, reviewers providing comments on ones of said individual elements.

22. A computer program product as in claim 21 where said item is a software
 source code block, said individual elements are individual lines of said source code,
 25 and said computer program code means for formatting further builds a comment file,
 collected comments on code lines being contained in said comment file.

23. A computer program product as in claim 22 where said item is a document,
 said individual elements are individual blocks of text of said document, and said
 30 computer program code means for formatting further builds a comment file,
 collected comments on blocks of code being contained in said comment file.

24. A computer program product as in claim 19 wherein the computer program
 code means for collecting comments comprises:

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computer program code means for providing items to reviewers; and

computer program code means for selecting said items for review responsive to reviewer selection.

25. A computer program product as in claim 24 wherein the item being reviewed is source code for software and elements of said source code are individual lines of code.

26. A computer program product as in claim 25 wherein the item being reviewed is a document and elements of said document are individual blocks of text.

27. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of instructions, the plurality of instructions including instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

- a) prepare an item for interactive review;
- b) make said prepared item available to a plurality of reviewers for comments on item elements;
- c) receiving comments from ones of said plurality of reviewers; and
- d) presenting said item and received said comments for a formal review meeting of said plurality of reviewers, whereby one or more of the previously provided comments sufficiently provides attending reviewers awareness of a particular condition with respect to said item that said comment may be addressed in said item prior to said formal review meeting, such that further action is unnecessary at the time of said formal review with respect to said particular condition and each corresponding said comment.

28. A computer readable medium as in claim 27 wherein the instruction step (a) of preparing said item for interactive review causes the processor to:

- i) selectively retrieve said item for review; and
- ii) format said item, individual item elements being identified for comment in said formatted item.

29. A computer readable medium as in claim 28 wherein said item is a text file and said formatting step ii) causes said processor to identify individual blocks of text

in said text file for comments and further, build a comment file, comments provided on said blocks of text being contained in said comment file.

30. A computer readable medium as in claim 28 wherein said item is source
5 code and said formatting step ii) causes said processor to identify individual lines of source code for comments and further, build a common file, comments provided on said lines of source code being contained in said comment file.

31. A computer readable medium as in claim 27 wherein items in a central
10 repository and the step i) of selecting said item causes the processor to connect over the Internet to said central repository and access said item.

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